



Christmas spirit was entered into during early papermaking era with the help of a little yuletide decoration. Showing off a roll of Camas paper are Joe Quillian, Mabs Smith and Alex Brand.

Camas Trading Tradition Began With Indians Who Were Middlemen In Columbia River Trade

(Article from the Post-Record Special Edition, May 14, 1953)

Products from Camas travel the world over rapidly, for the residents of this area have a trading tradition reaching back for hundreds of years.

The "Original Camanoans," the Indian tribes that lived in this area, were known as traders and plied their trade on the Columbia in their cedar dugout canoes as middlemen in a thriving ancient world of commerce. In their ocean going canoes they ranged as far north as Alaska and as far south as California to carry on a far-flung commerce.

Even the language from which they took their name Chinookan, was part of their business as tradesmen. It was an "animal of many breeds," since it took words from many languages and was universally understood by Northwest tribes.

Close to Mayans

The forbears of these Chinookans are an interesting lot, and scientists suspect that they may have played an important part in the heritage of the civilization of two continents. A study made by Dr. H. H. Wilson, keeper of ethnology of the United States National museum, indicates strong connections between the very early Columbia river civilization and the culture of the Mayans in

Guatemala. Either the earliest inhabitants of the Columbia river valley were the tutors and cultural ancestors of the Mayans, or possibly, the Mayans migrated from the soil of America through Mexico, up the coast of California and Oregon to the mouth of the Columbia.

Other accepted scientists including Alex Hrdlicka believe that man, on this continent learned his first lessons in culture in the valley of the Columbia. Evidence cut from rocks and sifted from the soil indicates these early Americans had learned to hunt, to fish, game, roots and berries. They made mats, wove cloth from the hair of mountain goat, wore sandals instead of moccasins, smoked pipes, wore ornaments of claws and sea shells, used ear and nose plugs, and wore Negligeons, painted their bodies, wore leather headaddresses and spears and bows and arrows. They cremated their dead, used a cuneiform "writing" and built pit houses like those now being found in Mayan cities.

Dr. H. H. Wilson, keeper of ethnology of the Royal Archaeological Society of England, states that the line of culture may stretch as far as ancient Egypt. He contends the Egyptians may have learned the art of pyramid building, and perhaps writing from the Mayans. They dressed, fought

and lived much as the early inhabitants of the Columbia valley did. They flattened the heads of their children as the Columbians did for centuries before them. They practiced slavery and human sacrifice, cremation and carving in stone in the same pattern as the

Indians of the Pacific Northwest.

Many Small Nations

The inhabitants of this region were organized into many small nations when the white man discovered them in the 1700's. While under the reign of King George III, Chinookan Indians and their neighbors lived in many small nations, much like the counties we now have. Each group had its own language, but all also spoke the Chinookan trade language.

These early people once probably numbered 80,000, but the white man had wiped out the race even before he appeared. Plagues of smallpox, fever andague and measles, coming via Spanish settlements in California and from captives from tribes having contact with the whites cut them to a much smaller number.

Early Indians

The Chinookans lived in well-protected cedar shake houses, often sixty feet wide and several hundred feet in length. Each family had its spouse within the house, separated from their neighbors by a headboard. It is rumored that the Chinookans had a strong belief in the hereafter and equipped their dead well for a fine life in a mythical happy hunting ground. Dressed in their best clothing, the dead Indians were placed in canoes for the long journey. Hunting

gear and everything needed for a trip were put into the vessel. Canoes were punctured and mended broken so their spirits could escape to accompany their master. It also made the object useless to thieves.

True Burial

The canoes were then raised into low limbs of trees, or were placed on stilts. Below the canoes at least two slaves were buried, human sacrifices who were blinded before death. They were to serve their master in the hereafter. The slaves were blinded so as mere slaves they could not look on the beauties of the land or the happy hunting ground.

Read Island, located in the Washougal river below the highway bridge, and above the railroad, was one of the Indians "death islands." Ten months after dealing with the Indians, the slaves were buried on the mainland. Locally the area now known as Evergreen Terrace was a burial ground.

It was a tribe of highly civilized trades that greeted the white man when he appeared in the Columbia. A people who were rightly proud of their way of life and were a formidable group to the race that was to take their land and their river and send their products ranging even wider in the world.

You do not have to be superstitious to believe in safety signs.



Fellow on top of machine (center) at Crown Zellerbach in early 1900's saw no need to put his shoes on for picture. Standing on floor, left to right are Smiley Williams, Dan

Camas Site 'Natural' For Paper Mill Because Of Water Power From Lackamas

(Article from the Post-Record Special Edition, May 14, 1953)

spent \$100,000 for land and improvements.

Crews under D. H. Stearns started at once to clear timber from the land chosen as a millsite and in July of 1883 construction was started on a sawmill to furnish lumber for the proposed paper mill.

According to articles published in the Vancouver Independent, a weekly paper of the day, machinery for the sawmill was landed by the steamer Calliope on August 20, 1883.

It was on September 10 that the original Camas townsite was laid out. Only two weeks before the first saw was set up, LaCamas lake had been finished, and the Independent reported 50 men were at work constructing the mill.

Camas was a flourishing community by this time, as businessmen had recognized it as a coming city. A. E. Scatchard, an old country Scotchman, opened the first store in the city. He sold the first piece of goods shortly after arriving with his stock on the steamer on Sept. 10, 1883, the same day the townsite was selected. His Pioneer store was all that the name implied and for years was a landmark in the city.

The historians estimated that two years after the paper mill construction started, the investors, H. L. Pitcock, W. Lethwaite and J. K. Gill, had

Number 2 in County

At this time the Vancouver Independent remarked that although not a building had yet been erected on the townsite of LaCamas, more business was being transacted in the community than any in the county outside of Vancouver.

A crew of 30 Chinese were brought into the area by the paper mill in March of 1884 to start work on the mill ditch to bring water from the lake to power the paper machines and for use in making paper. Other workers started laying the stone foundations for the mill in April of the same year.

Work progressed fast, since on August 7, 1884 the LaCamas correspondent of the Independent writes that "The Paper mill is up to the third story. Demand for lumber is so great the sawmill cannot furnish it, the tunnel that will furnish water will be cut through in a few days."

Booming Town

The lumber mill was designed to turn out some 30,000 feet of timber each working day, and it was hard put to keep up with construction in the booming town. On December 1, 1884 the first addition to the Camas townsite, Cowan's addition, was made. Located

on the first bench above the town proper, this addition contained seven homes when platted.

At the same time the Independent recorded more progress in industry. O. C. Grove was busy building a flouring mill, 30 x 40 feet and four stories high. It wasn't till November 19 of the next year that the LaCamas flouring mill delivered its first output to C. H. Hodges, however.

1929 Expansion

The mill, as we know it today, really came into being in a high expansion program in the years of 1929-30. Despite depression gloom throughout the nation, Crown Zellerbach directors authorized the investment of millions in expansion at Camas. The present converting plant was constructed on what had been a picnic area, and the overall plant capacity was jumped from 240 tons per day to 400 tons per day.

Expansion at the mill was increased 33 1/3 per cent as a result of the overall plant growth.

The Camas mill didn't lag a bit in the Thirties. Manufacture of all newsprint was stopped



1920's

million

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930

1930